# DESERT VOICE

**December 28, 2005** 

Serving the U.S. and Coalition Forces in Kuwait



## **CONTENTS**

## DESERT Voice

Volume 27, Issue 23

The Desert Voice is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of the Desert Voice are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government or Department of the Army. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Coalition Forces Land Component Command Public Affairs Office. This newspaper is published by Al-Qabandi United, a private firm, which is not affiliated with CFLCC. All copy will be edited. The Desert Voice is produced weekly by the

23



#### Page 3 Meeting answers questions

Command Sgt. Maj. Ashe holds a questionand-answer session during his town hall meeting with senior-enlisted troops.

#### Page 4 Operation Christmas Basket

Junior-enlisted servicemembers throughout Kuwait received a surprise gift bag from Operation Christmas Basket Dec. 20.

#### Page 5 Holiday greetings team

Soldiers from the 11th Public Affairs Detachment help troops in Kuwait and Camp Bucca, Iraq, send holiday greetings to loved ones back home.

#### Pages 667 Christmas in Kuwait

Pictures showing different Christmas events in Kuwait. The events included parties, Operation Santa Claus and a candle-light service.

#### Page 8 Chief of chaplains visits

During a prayer luncheon Dec. 22 Army Chief of Chaplains Maj. Gen. David Hicks spoke of his life-changing experiences throughout his 40-year career.

#### Page 8 Soldier produces album

Staff Sgt. Jason Bonner found the time to combine servicemembers' talents to produce *Live from Kuwait: Mix-tape vol.* 1.

#### Page 10 Riding like the wind

Maj. José Solís, a member of the Army cycling team, continues to display his competitive edge and athletic talent even while he is deployed.

#### Page 11 Community Events

Here are upcoming events: New Year's parties, holiday runs, spoon tournament, frisbee golf tournament and 1,000-pound club contest.

#### Back page Happy Holidays

a Christmas party.

Sgt. Maj. Anthony Lucas, C-3 sergeant major, is decorated by his Soldiers during

#### **CFLCC Commanding General**

Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb

#### CFLCC Command Sergeant Major

Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin G.

#### CFLCC Public Affairs Officer

Col. Barrett King

### CFLCC Public Affairs officer, Forward

Lt. Col. Debbie Haston-Hilger

#### Commander, 11th PAD

Capt. Chevelle Thomas

NCOIC, 11th PAD Staff Sgt. Kerensa Hardy

#### Desert Voice Editor

Sgt. Jonathan M. Stack

#### Desert Voice Assistant

Spc. Robert Adams

#### **Desert Voice Staff Writers**

Spc. Janine Coogler Spc. Debralee P. Crankshaw Spc. Michael R. Noggle

#### 11th PAD Broadcastors

Spc. Christina Beerman Pfc. Jheridiah Anderson

#### **Editor**

CFLCC PAO/ Desert Voice Camp Arifjan

APO AE 09306

jonathan.stack@arifjan.arcent.army.mil

Find us online at www.dvidshub.net

#### On the cover

Graphic illustration by Sgt. Robert Scott A family opens presents on Christmas morning by their decorative tree.





## Town hall meeting offers answers

#### Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin G. **Ashe**

**CFLCC Command Sergeant Major** 

As command sergeant major for Third U.S. Army, Coalition Forces Land Component Command and U.S. Army Forces Central Command, I serve as your command's senior enlisted leader. The only thing you need to take away from that is I'm here to take care of you, not to tell you how to do your job. I had a meeting with the senior enlisted leaders at Camp Arifjan's Zone 1 Chapel, Dec. 12. The purpose was to conduct professional development, clear the air about some unclear issues and keep Soldiers informed.

In my years of service, I've found the more I know about why I'm doing something, the better I feel about what I'm doing. It's been my experience that informed Soldiers are happy Soldiers. If you can take the time to tell your troops why they're doing something, they'll feel a lot better about what they're doing, even if they don't agree with it. These are some of the issues that were discussed during that meeting.

What is CFLCC and what is its purpose? The Army is normally the proponent in A The Army is normany and a charge of the land war. CFLCC came about at the request of Gen. John Abizaid at the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001. Third U.S. Army has been deployed since then and was initially the overall headquarters for operations in Afghanistan. When the War on Terrorism found its way to Iraq, Third U.S. Army became the headquarters for the fight there. The Coalition Forces Land Component Command is not a permanent thing. Third U.S. Army is CFLCC, it's not separate. The Third U.S. Army is also the U.S. Army Forces Central Command. CFLCC supports that.

How will upcoming troop reductions affect operations here? You've probably heard about troop Areductions in Iraq and Afghanistan, beginning possibly next year. CFLCC isn't going to go anywhere anytime soon. The enemy has a vote in everything we're doing. Even if we downsize in Iraq and Afghanistan, it won't change what we do here in Kuwait. It might change how much we're doing here but not what we do, which is sustaining the fighting force. We provide them with fuel, food, ammunition, medical support, communication support, coordinating aircraft and the Rest and Recuperation leave program and so

If this is an Army Forces Command operation, why are we working with other branches of the military?

Here's an example: If the Third Army Commander tells the CENTCOM commander he needs a surgical hospital in Kuwait. The CENTCOM commander submits a request for forces to Joint Forces Command, a force provider to all regional combatant commanders. Joint Forces Command receives that request and validates it. They will then task a branch of service to provide that hospital and gives the specifications for its capabilities and the duration of its mission. Because of how big the war is and how long it's been going on, it no longer matters which branch of service can provide the capability as long as it can provide the required function on the battlefield. It's the same capability just a different service. In any joint environment, it's a good experience because of the dynamics created by the different backgrounds and experience.

What is the purpose of General Order

The number one thing we do everyday enforcing standards, instilling discipline and keeping watch over our areas of operation. General order number one is a guideline we all have to follow to maintain good order and discipline. Under General Order #1, Soldiers are prohibited from possessing or consuming alcohol, unless on R&R leave at Camp As Saliyah in Qatar.

Controlled substances or drugs, to include steroids, are not allowed. Abuse of these substances may be detected by a command analysis program.

Soldiers may not possess pornographic material or participate in gambling. We must stay sharp at all times while performing our various missions here. There is no place for any of these items in this theater of operation. **Comment:** Compliment on the smooth operation of the Rest and Recuperation Leave

**Response:** The staff working at the airbase deserves these compliments. It's an awesome

The program is for Soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait who are stationed for a year or longer. These personnel get a 15-day leave. They're processed through the Life Support Area and given a flight back to

When I was in Afghanistan, I took R&R leave. When you get back to the states and you walk back into the terminal in uniform, it's a religious experience. There are a lot of things I've experienced in the Army that



Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin G. Ashe

made me want to cry but I can honestly say the only time I ever cried in uniform was when I walked into the airport in Dallas, Texas on R&R leave. You would not believe the reception I got from the American people in that airport. It is a great program. Thanks to everyone who has anything to do with making it happen.

Are Marines required to salute in

Recently we've had occasions where A Marine enlisted personnel would not salute Army officers or a Marine officer reprimanded an enlisted Airman for saluting him here in Kuwait. I've already researched this through staff channels and both these Marines were in violation of Marine Corps regulations. There aren't any "No hat, No Salute Areas" in Kuwait. What happens is, in some in environments leaders in Marine Expeditionary Units will tell their subordinates not to salute in the combat zone. I'm working through Marine Corps channels to get that fixed. If a Marine tells you he doesn't salute, he's wrong. In fact, if he doesn't salute even in Iraq he's wrong because Marine Corps policy says you don't salute within sight of the enemy. It's not the Marine's fault.

He doesn't mean it in a disrespectful way; he's just standing behind what he was told to

Any time you have concerns, feel free to bring them to me regardless of which branch of service you're in. I'll take them where they need to go.

I also want to thank each of you for what you do here.

The things that are going on here in Kuwait are incredible. No matter what your job is, don't take what you're doing here for granted - PATTON'S OWN.

## Christmas baskets bring heart, thought to giving

Spc. Debralee P. Crankshaw CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

Holiday tidings come every year and for the past 11 years a special Mr. and Mrs. Claus and their children have brought cheer to servicemembers in Kuwait.

Since 1994, the Gittens' Foundation, founded by Lionel and Shelia Gittens has hosted a holiday operation in memory of their son, Darnell.

The operation brings joy to servicemembers, but it was a tragic event that started it.

Operation Thanksgiving began after the death of the Gittens' son. He died of kidney failure in April of 1994 and to help cope with their grief, the Gittens' founded Operation Thanksgiving.

"He wasn't in the military but he loved life," Shelia said. "Being so far from home we used this to help us get over the depressed feelings."

It started as Operation Thanksgiving, serving Thanksgiving dinner to more than 3,000 servicemembers. The operation recently developed into Operation Christmas Basket, bringing servicemembers gift bags filled with goodies.

This year the goodies included fanny packs, shoulder bags, calendars, rubix cubes, Uno cards, playing cards, Dominoes, jewelry boxes, lotion, personal hygiene items, hats and stress balls.

"This is not cheap stuff," said Master Sgt. Vanessa Wiggins, Operation Christmas basket noncommissioned officer in charge. "They're getting name-brand, expensive, usable items."

There were also special presents which included cashmere robes, hand-embroidered tablecloths and table runner's watches, crystal vases, watch sets with pens, facial sets and cultural gifts.

The bags were distributed throughout the camps in Kuwait to all junior-enlisted servicemembers. More than 100,000 gifts were handed out to troops.

"I'm impressed," Wiggins said. "For people to think about Soldiers away from home... Every E-4 and below will receive a gift from someone they don't know."

Many servicemembers said they enjoyed the gifts and appreciated the thoughtfulness of the gesture.

"It's the thought that counts," said Spc. Lori Walker, chaplain's assistant, Coalition Forces Land Component Command chaplain section. "It's not necessarily what's in the bag, but that people are thinking about those who may not have families. I liked having something I could open, too. I don't think anyone is ever too old to open presents."

"It was thoughtful and considerate," said Pfc. Jennifer Snow, paralegal specialist, CFLCC Staff Judge Advocate office. "They put a lot of heart and thought into giving. I thought it was neat that they took the time to do this for all of us."

The Gittens began the operation with the intention of only doing it for five years, but now they say they can't give it up and are passing the torch to their son, Tracy.



Spc. Debralee P. Crankshav

Servicemembers load a truck with presents for Operation Christmas Basket to be wrapped and distributed.

"We never stopped because of the Soldiers," Shelia said.

"We were getting so many letters from Soldiers, we had some ladies cry and even gave gifts to someone with no family at all – things like that made us keep doing it," she said.

"We keep doing it because of the joy it brought to troops – to fulfill that loneliness, to be that instrument gives a good feeling," Lionel added.

Although the gifts have been handed out, Operation Christmas Basket isn't quite over yet. Servicemembers have a chance to let their voice be heard with an essay or poem for a \$350 contest. The winner will also be published in next year's Operation Christmas Basket calendar.

## Bush visits with troops

Spc. Robert Adam

Former President George H.W. Bush shakes hands with troops during the holidays outside the Camp Arifjan chapel Dec. 18. Bush spoke to servicemembers and posed for holiday group photos with them.



#### Tending his flock ...

## Noggle's top 10 songs for the holidays

10. John Denver - "Have yourself a Merry Little Christmas" It wasn't snowing in Denver without John's carols.

9. Kenny G - "We Three Kings/ Carol of the Bells"

Every shopping mall I step into during the holiday season has the soloist playing one of his great hits.

8. Adam Sandler - "Hanukah song"

There aren't too many Hanukah songs out there and that is why Sandler wrote this comical piece.

7. Whitney Houston - "Joy to the World"

Before playing with the white snow, Whitney displayed her musical talents in her solo in "The Preachers Wife" that put her in the top 10.

6. Alan Jackson - "Have a Holly, Jolly Christmas"

The Georgia native has climbed as one of the most well-known country singers in the business. He has recorded numerous billboard hits. It is his Christmas songs that put him in this category.

5. Larry the Cable Guy - "Larry's Christmas Carols"

No matter where you are from you can't help but laugh when I heard Larry and his carols.

4. Louis Armstrong - "What a wonderful world"

Louis plays from the heart. When I see the skies of blue and the clouds of white ... I think to myself, 'What a wonderful world.

3. Eric Cartman - "Oh Holy Night"

If you haven't heard this song before than you wouldn't understand. The little, fat South Park character solo was hilarious.

2. Boyz 2 Men - "Silent Night"

The first time I heard this song was on the "Fresh Prince of Bel-Air". The group blasted their way to the top of the charts in the early '90s and now appears on "Where are they now?"

1. Elvis Presley - "White Christmas"

Here's to the king... When it comes to all-time greatest songs, Elvis will always find his way to the top.

#### That's a wrap

## Holiday greets team completes 2005 season

Spc. Michael R. Noggle CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

"Our job is telling the Soldier's story and we're able to take it a step further and connect Soldiers with their families back home," said Christina Beerman, 11th Public Affairs Detachment broadcaster.

She added, "I think it makes what we do even more valuable, like we're making an impact or a difference out here."

Holiday greetings have become a popular method for servicemembers to send a surprise message to their family and friends at home while they are serving around the world.

As part of their mission for the 11th PAD deployed to Camp Arifjan, Beerman and Pfc. Jheridiah Anderson, broadcasters, started filming in late October and finished early December traveling to seven camps in Kuwait and one in Iraq recording messages from U.S. servicemembers and department of defense civilians.

Given a short timetable of two days at each camp along with editing the film and sending the footage to network television marketers in the United States, the team was able to complete more than 1,000 greetings from individuals as well as unit messages before their Christmas deadline.

"Time became crucial with Iraq our final destination and the deadline was only two weeks away," Beerman said.

"When one of us was out at a shoot, the

other was editing footage from the week prior," she said.

Anderson said the difficult camps were those with servicemembers waiting to go into

"Units were finishing with their training for the day and would stop in to see what we were doing with a camera," he said.

"We told them who we were and that we're more than eager to send

their family a message," Anderson said.

Working throughout the afternoon and into the night, the team was willing to extend their hours for anyone who weren't able to make the designated times.

"The feedback we get reflects that, servicemembers will come up to us and tell us how their mother, father, sister or brother sent them emails and told them over the phone that it was cool to see them on TV wishing them a happy holiday," Beerman said. "That's what makes all the hard work and long hours worth it."

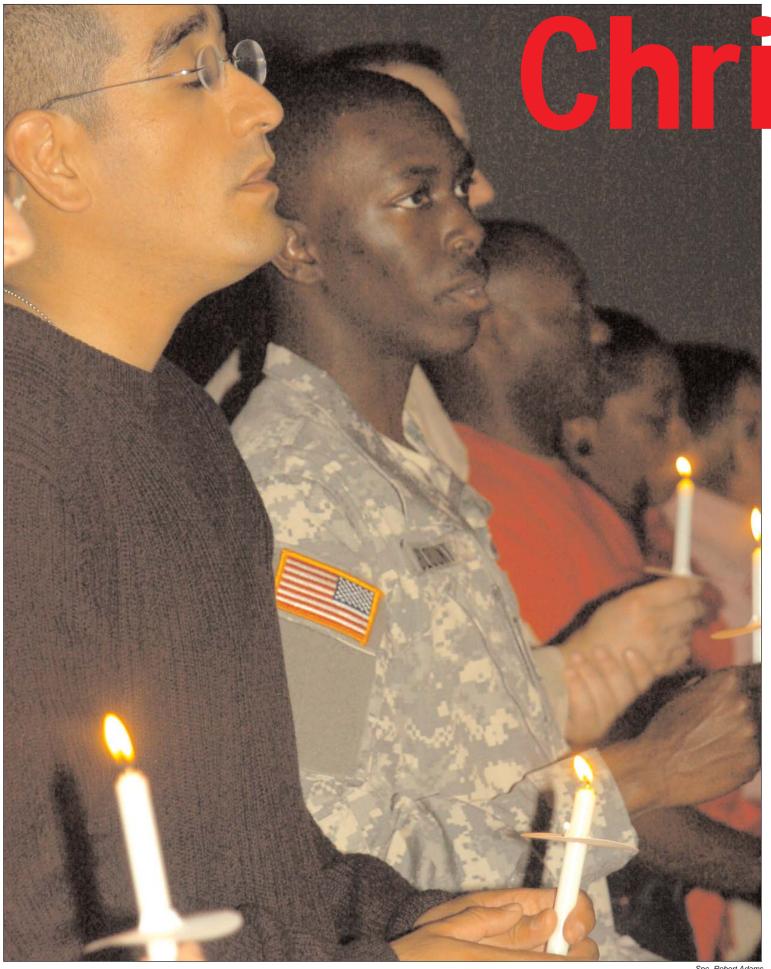


Spc. Christina Beerman, 11th PAD broadcaster, records a holiday greeting with a Soldier at Camp Bucca, Iraq, Dec. 7.

"We are here for them, if that meant staying an extra 30 minutes that night then we would," Beerman said.

She added, "Even though the servicemembers couldn't be home for the holidays, we wanted to help them send a message to those they love."

For any servicemember serving in the Middle East wanting to see their holiday greeting, go to www.dvidshub.net and click on the "Holiday Greetings" link in the right corner of the home page. From there, the messages are separated by state.



Spc. Robert Adams

Servicemembers sing Silent Night during the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at the Camp Arifjan chapel Saturday.

# Stmas in Kuwait



Santa Clause hands out candy canes to people at the Special Troops Battalion Christmas party Dec. 17.

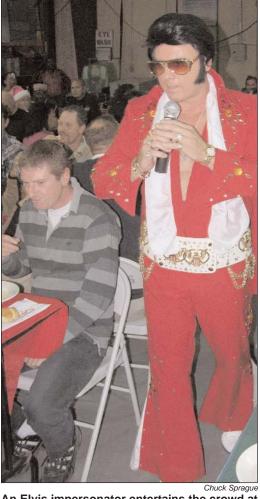


Spc. Marcos Alices Kinch

Spc. Ian Parker plays the bag pipes to start the festivities at a Christmas party when Dec. 17.



Senior STB personel sing Christmas carols to help bring the spirit to the Christmas party.



An Elvis impersonator entertains the crowd at the Army Material Command Christmas festivities Friday.



Senior 377th Theater Support Command personel help sort out mail Christmas Eve in support of Operation Santa Clause.

## Army chief of chaplains encourages troops

Spc. Janine Coogler CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

Army recruits are often told that the military will change their life for the better, it will instill self-discipline, motivation and characteristics they never knew they had.

Maj. Gen. David Hicks, Army chief of chaplains, spoke of his life-changing experiences in his 40-year Army career during a prayer luncheon Dec. 22 at the Zone 6 dining facility.

"I want to encourage Soldiers ... get Soldiers to think about the journey of life and become excited about the possibilities God has for them," Hicks said.

As a young sergeant in the Army, Hicks said he found himself partying, drinking and heading in the wrong direction.

Struggling with life, Hicks said he lost hope in his life, and was at the point of giving up.

"I remember trying to read the Bible and trying to pray, but I could not make sense of any of it." After escorting a company of Soldiers to the chapel, Hicks found himself in the chaplain's office. "He explained to me that God will take me for who I am."

Following his discharge, Hicks attended and graduated from United Wesleyan College then went on to pursue his calling to the ministry at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Hicks became a chaplain in the Army because he said he felt God leading him to encourage Soldiers.

Hicks' responsibilities include supporting and guiding more than 2,500 active-duty and Reserve chaplains who represent a diversity of denominations.

Following his visit to Camp Arifjan, Hicks went to minister and talk to servicemembers in Iraq.

Finding purpose in life will bring about a sense of joy and it can be found through a personal relationship with God, Hicks said.

"To achieve this relationship, people must pray," he explained. "Through prayer we can cry out and speak to God, as well as listen to what He has to say to us."

Besides giving his testimony and encouraging Soldiers at the prayer luncheon, Hicks ensured the ministries on Arifjan are reaching out and fitting the spiritual needs of servicemembers.

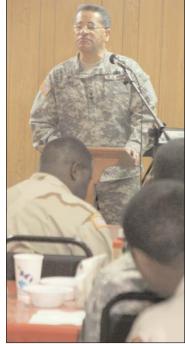
Servicemembers throughout the military have a variety of faiths and Hicks said chaplains should try to provide and meet all the needs of the troops.

"I don't try to beat people over the head and make them believe, I simply try to model my spiritual leadership by reaching out to people and drawing them closer to God."

Even when speaking with fellow chaplains, Hicks said he focuses on taking spiritual leadership to the next level.

"We can all grow deeper in our faith. In doing so, our level of performance will be a higher level of excellence and will lead to a positive effect to the Army culture," Hicks said.

While in the military Hicks



Spc. Janine Coogler

Maj. Gen. David Hicks, Army chief of chaplains, speaks to the audience during a prayer luncheon Dec. 22.

said he found his missing piece. "I found my purpose: to help Soldiers find hope, meaning and support through God."

## Ukraine support group prepares for troops

Spc. Janine Coogler CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

After seven months of working hard in Iraq, 15 Ukrainian soldiers from the 81st Task Force came to Camp Virginia Dec. 22 to coordinate the movement of more than 800 troops.

The group coordinated with the Task Force Gator to obtain all needed materials for in- and outgoing troops.

With all the countries in the Coalition rotating around the same time, each country must have a liaison officer or support group to coordinate affairs.

The 81st Task Force support group is in charge of getting air and ground transportation, food, tents and equipment for his country's troops, said Ukraine Capt. Sergey Tyutyunnik, 81st Task Force translator of Logistic.

The Ukraine troops are comprised of regular army, signal and airborne soldiers.

"Their airborne troops are their toughest

troops," said Maj. Greg Willingham, Task Force Gator country officer. "They can be compared to our Special Forces."

The airborne soldiers help in the transition from U.S. military and coalition troops to Iraqi security forces. In order to ensure the Iraqi force is ready, Coalition partners train the Iraqi forces.

After months of training, less supervision was needed and the Iraqi soldiers were completing missions on their own.

As a group of Iraqi soldiers fixed a broken-down vehicle in the middle of a convoy, their Ukrainian trainers proudly stood by seeing the success the Iraqi's mission, Tyutyunnik explained.

In addition to successfully completing missions, the Ukrainian soldiers gave the Iraqi forces equipment to conduct their missions.

"Our priority is to support, advise and train Iraqi soldiers, as well as provide security around the borders of our area of responsibility," Tyutyunnik said. All deployed Ukrainian troops volunteered to contribute in the War on Terror, Tyutyunnik said. "Our dedication to the cause is shown through our performance in training the Iraqi forces."

With 30 years in the Ukraine army, Tyutyunnik has deployed several times to various countries.

"I've been to Bosnia and Africa."

Tyutyunnik explained. "Although this is my toughest deployment, the support given to us has been the best of all my deployments."

This deployment is rough for many of the Ukraine soldiers because of the drastic climate and culture change, Tyutyunnik said.

Like many deployed servicemembers, the Ukraine troops are anxious to return home to their country where they are comfortable with the climate, have friends, family and food they enjoy, Tyutyunnik said.

The 81st TF soldiers return home having contributed to the stabilization of Iraq after overcoming the change of climate and culture, as well as completing their mission.

### Soldier combines music with talent to produce album

Spc. Janine Coogler CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

A truck with a microphone and computer beat systems combined makes an unconventional studio. It became the setting for Soldiers at Camp Virginia to unleash their talents.

During a 10-month project, Staff Sgt. Jason Bonner combined the talents of several Soldiers throughout Kuwait to produce "Live from Kuwait: Mix-tape Vol. 1."

The hip-hop compact disc features music from various Soldiers who lyrically describe their heartfelt experiences, thoughts and feel-

Most of the songs on the CD were recorded in the unconventional studio, while others were recorded at Camp Arifjan's Zone 6 studio.

"The idea of a mix-tape came to me at a talent show at Camp Virginia," Bonner said. The winner of the contest was a Dutch army soldier.

Although the audience did not know what he was rapping, it was a unique and interesting experience, Bonner said.

"I knew that no one would believe me back home, so I had him come record his track at the studio."

Propelled with the idea of producing a mix-tape, Bonner, who came to Arifjan for three months, decided to pass out fliers requesting artists to record songs and do shout-outs.

"I wanted to complete an album and keep making music but I also felt compelled to involve the people I knew out here who have talent. That desire turned into a campaign to find out what the Soldiers in Kuwait had to offer," Bonner said.

Although he did not get any calls for two months, he did not lose sight of his goal. He began hosting freestyle battles at Arifjan. Soon after, people wanted to record songs.

"It is great to see the Soldiers' faces light up when they hear their recordings," Bonner said.

Spc. Brian Henderson, Coalition Forces Land Component Command operations specialist, who is featured on the mixtape, said he never expected to have the

opportunity to get to a studio in Kuwait. He is featured on several freestyle albums

from Rochester, N.Y. and Raleigh N.C. "I was surprised to see a professional studio out here in Kuwait," he said. "The studio out in Zone 6 combined with Staff Sgt. Bonner's equipment made it real professional."

The mix-tape includes 31 tracks of mixes and shout-outs from soldiers. The CD incorporates songs that bring out the many situations Soldiers struggle with in their families, deployment and life.

"This is a mix-tape for Soldiers, by Soldiers," Bonner said.

He added, "It is dedicated to all the Soldiers who lost their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom,"



Spc. Janine Coogler

Staff. Sgt. Jason Bonner raps into the microphone at his self-made studio at Camp Virginia.

One track on the album titled "All Gave Some, but Some Gave All" speaks about the fallen Soldiers and their dedication to the military and our nation.

Bonner recorded many songs and shoutouts for Soldiers, but one stands out in his

Cpl. Bernard Lawrence Ceo, 243rd Engineer Company, who was killed in a convoy accident south of Baghdad, recorded three songs with Bonner.

"His goal was to record five songs before returning home," Bonner said. "He only had the chance to do three."

The project, propelled by Bonner's desire to complete an album, produced a hip-hop CD that showcases the talents of Soldiers in Kuwait



## Rockin' the holidays

Mitch Allen, SR-71's vocalist/guitarist, sings some lyrics to servicemembers at Camp Buehring Dec. 19. He came with X-Men2's Kelly Hu in part of the "Ambassadors of Hollywood Tour," sponsored by the U.S. Army Morale, Welfare and Recreation. The two celebrities attracted a multitude of Soldiers who lined up to take pictures and get autographs.

## Ride like the wind

Army cycling stud Solís continues to perform at a professional level while deployed, the fact that he is 40 years old hasn't slowed him down

Spc. Robert Adams **Assistant Editor** 

He used to keep his eyes glued to the road ahead as he glided along tree-lined streets, but now that he is deployed, he peddles in place on his stationary bike with his eyes glued to his television.

Putting his cycling world on hold, Maj. José Solís, Coalition Forces Land Component Command C-4 logistics automation chief, volunteered to deploy to Kuwait for a year.

But the fact that he isn't competing on a cycling circuit this year hasn't kept Solís from displaying his athletic ability and competitive edge.

Fully clad in his slick racing gear, Solís can be found on Camp Arifjan running, swimming, lifting weights or riding his stationary bike in his room.

He is also one of the top runners in the local 5-kilometer races and performed well at the recent Veteran's Day Invitational Track and Field Meet Nov. 12 and 13, sweeping the over-40 competition in the 400-meter dash (58.6 seconds), the 800meter run (2:23.6) and the 1600meter run (5:21.2).

"That was my first track meet ever," said Solís, who picked up competitive running here to fill the void of cycling competitions.

His next running competition will be at the Holly Jolly Jog 5-K Thursday where he can be seen showcasing his talent.

"Since I can't cycle out here, I had to pick other sports to stay active," Solis said. "The reason why I'm doing this is to keep my fitness level high... All of the training I have been doing has paid off."

The Puerto Rico native first started cycling at 14, but then



cialized

Mai, José Solís, CFLCC C-4 logistics automation chief, rides against pro-cyclists in a Georgia's Cup series race. Solís rides on the Army cycling team, the Puerto Rican National Cycling Team, and for his Dodge Team in stateside and international races.

gave it up when he joined the Army and became a cavalry scout in 1986.

After a 16-year break, he picked back up his former love of cycling in 2002.

"I got on "The reason why I'm doing this is to pound spethe bike and I thought 'I keep my fitness level high..." Maj. José Solís bike for still got it,""

He made the Army cycling team and Puerto Rican National Team and represented them at races there as well as in Venezuela and Colombia.

he said.

"It was great," Solís said. "I was back at full speed, and I decided I was going to keep doing this."

When Solís is back at Fort

Benning, he cranks out an average of 375 miles a week with his cycling partners, working around a busy work schedule.

He rides a light-weight, 16pound Carbon Giant bike in races and a 30-

training. He also adds weight to his training rides by filling his pockets with heavy tools to add to the challenge.

The work paid off, he said, because he started winning races. And with winning, came sponsorship from Dodge and "Ride on Bikes" bike shop.

Solís has raced and performed well in the Tour de Puerto Rico,



Staff Sgt. LaTorry Sidney

Solís raises his arms in victory after winning the over-40 1600meter run with a time of 5:12 at the Veteran's Day Invitational Track and Field Meet Nov. 13 at Camp Arifjan. Solís also won the 400- and 800-meter races and was named most valuable player for his age category.

a race he said the pros used as a train up for the Tour de Georgia.

That race consisted of time trials, road races and a series of laps. Solís finished 16th in the fourth stage of the race and 13th in the final stage. Solís, who was 39 at the time, was the secondoldest rider in the final stage.

"Why do I keep doing this at my age?" Solís asked himself. "To give my kids a great example that once you set your mind to anything, your commitment and discipline are some of the key components to achieve success."

## **Community** happenings for Dec. 28 through Jan. 4

#### Ali Al Salem

#### For information call 442-2005

#### **Arifjan**

#### Wednesday

Softball tournament

Basketball tournament

Flag football league post season tournament, Zone 1 soccer field

Boxing class, 7 p.m., Zone 6 Fitness Center "The Second Amendments, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6

#### **Thursday**

Holiday 5k run, 6 a.m., Zone 1 Fitness Center Pool tournament, 8-ball, 7 p.m., Zone 6 Community Center

Ballroom dancing, 8 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Tai Chi, 4 p.m., 8 p.m., Zone 1 Fitness Center The Ride, 6 p.m., Zone 1 Fitness Center Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

#### **Friday**

Boxing class, 8 p.m., Zone 6 Fitness Center Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

#### **Saturday**

New Year's Eve party, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community and Fitness Centers, Zone 6 Community Center

Boxing class, 7 p.m., Zone 6 Fitness Center Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 food court Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage Step and abs, 5 a.m., 1 p.m., Zone 1 Fitness Center

Abs, 8 a.m., Zone 1 Fitness Center

#### Monday

Karaoke Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community

Step and abs, 5 a.m., Zone 1 Fitness Center

**Tuesday** 

Ballroom dancing, 8 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Cardio kickboxing, 5 a.m., Zone 1 Fitness Center

#### For more information call 430-1205/1302

#### Army LSA at Ali Al Salem

#### For information call 859-1060

#### Buehring

#### Wednesday

Jingle Bell Jog, 6:30 p.m., Hole in One Donut Spoon tournament, 7 p.m., MWR Oasis

#### **Thursday**

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Scrabble tournament, 7 p.m., MWR Oasis Friday

Hip-hop dance, 9 p.m., MWR Tent 1 Karaoke Night, 8 p.m., MWR stage

#### **Saturday**

New Year's Eve party, 9 p.m., MWR stage Spa Day, 10 a.m., MWR Tent 1 Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., gym

#### Sunday

New Year's Field Day, 9 a.m., Fitness Center

Spoon tournament, 7 p.m., MWR Oasis

#### **Tuesday**

Chess and Checkers tournament, 3 p.m., **MWR Oasis** 

#### Wednesday

Texas Hold 'em tournament, 3 p.m., MWR

Weekly fun run, 7.5k, 5:30 p.m., Hole-n-one

#### For more information call 828-1340

#### Kuwait Naval Base

#### Wednesday

Dominoes, 7 p.m.

#### Friday

Bingo, 7 p.m., Fitness Center bench area Saturday

Chess, 7 p.m.

#### For more information call 839-1063

#### Navistar

#### Wednesday

White camel gift exchange, MWR tent Holiday fun run, 6 a.m., MWR tent

#### **Thursday**

White camel gift exchange, MWR tent

White camel gift exchange, MWR tent Saturday

New Year's party, 7 p.m., stage

#### Monday

Ping-pong tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent Poker tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent Volleyball tournament, 8 a.m., volleyball courts

#### **Tuesday**

Ping-pong tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent Poker tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent Volleyball tournament, 8 a.m., volleyball courts

#### Wednesday

Ping-pong tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent Poker tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent Volleyball tournament, 8 a.m., volleyball courts

#### For more information call 844-1137

#### Spearhead/SPOD

#### For information call 825-1302

#### Victory

#### Wednesday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom Movie Night, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

#### **Thursday**

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

1,000 pound club contest, 3 p.m., gym

#### **Friday**

Movie night, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

#### **Saturday**

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

New Year's Eve 5k run, 6 a.m., MWR courts New Year's Eve countdown dance, 10 p.m., **MFT** 

#### Sunday

Flag football championships, 3 p.m., MWR fields

#### Monday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom Frisbee golf tournament, 3 p.m., MWR fields **Tuesday** 

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom MWR challenge, 6 a.m., PSD Tent

#### Wednesday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom Spades tournament, 3 p.m., MWR fields

#### For more information call 823-1033

#### **Virginia**

#### Wednesday

Volleyball, 6 vs. 6, 6 p.m., volleyball courts Country Night, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

Pool tournament, 7 p.m., Sports Lounge Karaoke Night, 8 p.m., Dusty Room Friday

#### Checkers, 7 p.m., Community Center

Saturday New Year's Eve dance contest, 9 p.m., Dusty

#### Room

**Sunday** Pingpong tournament, 7 p.m., Community

#### Center Monday

Basketball, 5 vs. 5, 5 p.m., basketball courts Tuesday

Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

#### For more information call 832-1045

